

Young generations and new patterns of emigration

The Finnish-Italian case

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Does a European identity exist? The search for identity has always been important to analyse the features of social and institutional contexts. In order to catch the real nature of a problem, no matter if one is speaking about individuals, groups or institutions, the analysis of identity always looks to be on the main track (Anthony Giddens, 2007).

New migrations and European identities

The primary aim of this research is to analyse the modern issue of "new migrations" in the circuit of young generations from European countries. The originality of this project lies in the belief that further and critical aspects of the issue can be focused looking just at the opposite "sides" of the European scenery. In the context of the European Union, Italy and Finland

show a good range of differences concerning mentality, working experiences, economy, history, welfare state and, not last, conception of moving and travelling. In this sense, they can be described as "two opposite poles" of the European setting, and for this reason they were chosen as an original perspective for the topic. Obviously these differences are especially significant when considering new generations.

The research is structured in two parts: Firstly in a theoretical study of new migrations aimed at understanding the most relevant changes in the old and new migration patterns, focusing on the differences between Italy and Finland; Secondly in an experimental study, where semi-standardized interviews have been conducted with a selected sample of "new emigrants", from 18 to 35 years old, moving on the Finnish-Italian route.

New migration tendencies in the integrated Europe have led many recent researchers to describe a "Euro-generation" of individuals, defined by peculiar features and needs (Adriano Farano, 2005). Following this track, the current research is aimed to add more elements to the sociological description of a new generation of emigrants, grown and set in the

new course of European integration.

Italian emigration in the world: features and numbers

There are about 58 million persons in the world originating from Italy. This large number, being so close to the quantity of the Italian residents, brought many commentators to speak about "two different Italies" (Luciano Segafredo, 1996) the Italy in Europe and another Italy spread all over the world. The latter very often appears more multicultural, multilingual and heterogeneous, than the former.

Who are the Italians living abroad? Where do they live? In 1988 the government created a new general register to classify all citizens living outside the national borders. Since then, everyone leaving the country for more than 90 days have to give notice to the Ministry of Internal Affairs through the municipalities. Another source of information is provided by consular registers, which send all relevant statistics to the Foreign Ministry. For many years these registers haven't been carefully updated, so they used to seriously lag behind the real situation. Things started to improve in the

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Italians in Europe		
European Countries	Persons	Families
Albania	338	287
Andorra	287	212
Austria	14.220	8.352
Belgium	239.374	130.093
Byelorussia	36	27
Bosnia-Herzegovina	398	232
Bulgaria	417	299
Croatia	7.597	5.010
Denmark	4.131	2.556
Estonia	73	50
Macedonia	97	60
Russia	1.237	880
Finland	1.545	924
France	363.542	193.688
Germany	575.565	283.154
Greece	9.626	5.117
Ireland	4.962	3.124
Island	153	102
Latvia	54	35
Liechtenstein	1.220	622
Lithuania	65	56
Luxembourg	21.458	11.777
Malta	1.154	638
Moldova	35	27
Monaco	6.010	3.850
Norway	1.973	1.226
The Netherlands	28.042	15.848
Poland	1.917	1.211
Portugal	3.158	2.087
United Kingdom	164.961	97.110
Czech Republic	1.781	1.186
Romania	2.080	1.591
San Marino	8.220	4.751
Serbia and Montenegro	795	463
Slovakia	296	218
Slovenia	2.292	1.454
Spain	62.986	39.647
Sweden	7.416	4.370
Switzerland	491.226	254.797
Ukraine	222	176
Hungary	1.437	892
Europe	2.039.149	1.078.603
Source: Ministry for Internal Affaires – 31 December 2005.		

last two years: after the approval of the new law for emigrants' participation in political elections (April 2006), the government and municipalities finally started to update the registers. According to the Research Institute of Migration of Rome, there are about 3.5 millions of Italian citizens spread in 201 different countries. 7 percent of the citizens are currently living abroad, and their number corresponds to 2.5 percent of all emigrants in the entire world. It means that one emigrant out of 40 in the world is Italian (the highest rate among industrialized countries).

In most cases, the average age of the emigrants is very high, but it is possible to find relevant exceptions: the huge increase of Italians detected by the Ministry archives during the last 10 years in Great Britain was considered to be a direct effect of "new migrations". It was soon very clear that Great Britain represented the most attractive country for young Italians. and the main background for new migration' researchers (C. Caltabiano, 2004).

The following table gives a general view of the presence of Italians in Europe.

Migration from and to Finland

The Finnish migration streams have changed direction many times since the years of the great North American exodus a hundred years ago. After the Second World War Sweden needed immigrants, and Finland had surplus labor. This boosted the emigration to Sweden to such a

magnitude that the Finnish population declined when the emigration peaked in 1970. Compared to this the Finnish emigration to the rest of Europe was only a trickle. Germany Great Britain and Norway hosted most of the Finnish emigrants to Europe in the middle of the 1990's. This emigration was different in character from the mass-migration to Sweden. Sweden had attracted unskilled industrial labor, while those who headed to other European countries were well-educated, most of them young women. Much of it was marriage migration, but a significant number of the migrants were nurses seeking work opportunities outside Finland.

The emigration from Finland waned off in the 1980's while immigration increased. Finland ceased exporting unskilled labor, and when Finland joined the EU in 1995 the emigrants were skilled professionals, entrepreneurs, students, marriage migrants etc. Nowadays some 15.000 Finns are living in Germany, around 6000 in Great Britain and more than 4000 in Switzerland. Generally the "new emigrants" from Finland to Europe are less than 35 years old and well educated (Olavi Koivukangas, 2003).

Even though the number of foreigners living in Finland is quite small (2.3 percent at the end of 2006, with Russian immigrants consisting the biggest single group), the society is turning in a multicultural direction following the same patterns as other European countries. The Finnish and Italian situations show similar development tendencies: after a long history of emigration, both

countries gradually became popular destinations for growing fluxes of immigrants. Even though the numbers are very different in proportion, in both cases the European integration and new patterns of migration seem to play a crucial role for the future.

The preliminary study

The total number of Finnish citizens living in Italy 2003 was 1,913 and the number of Italian citizens in Finland in 2005 was 1,545.

What does a closer inspection of these numbers reveal? How many Italians have been moving to Finland after 1995, the year of Euro-15 birth? What kind of trends followed this process? How many young Finns have moved to Italy?

The following table sheds some light on the situation.

Year	Finland to Italy	Italy to Finland
1993	36	42
1994	86	56
1995	88	76
1996	88	81
1997	75	61
1998	74	72
1999	99	77
2000	124	104
2001	135	116
2002	97	115
2003	107	120
2004	121	126
2005	103	146
2006	108	184
Source: Statistics Finland		

Table 1. shows the number of young Finns (15-34 years old)

moving to Italy and young Italians moving to Finland for not less than 12 months between 1993 and 2006. The numbers show a continuous slight increase.

It is interesting to note that there is no significant increase of Finns in Italy after 1995, the year of Finland joining the European Union.

In 1998, when the Finnish economy had recovered from the early 1990's recession the number rose a little and has been at a slightly higher level since then. More young Italians have migrated to Finland than young Finns to Italy. From 1993 to 2006 the number of Italians moving to Finland has increased every year. The biggest increase is registered for the last two years. From 1993 to 2006, the number has more than quadrupled, from 42 to 184.

Even if the migrants are few and do not compare to the number going to the UK, young Italians seem to be more and more interested in the Finnish stage. Even though the euro-oriented spirit of Italians finds its favored destination in London, at same time it starts to look toward such countries as Finland for new, interesting opportunities.

It is quite difficult to predict what kind of direction this tendency is going to take. Keeping in mind that Finland, at least until the end of the 1980's, was almost unknown to Italian expatriates, the fact that nowadays some hundreds of "new emigrants" choose every year that "opposite pole of Europe" as favored destination, must be kept in a due consideration.

The questionnaire

The sample consists of 15 Finns and 15 Italians; they were asked to reply to a written questionnaire. The aim was to collect as much qualitative information as possible about their experience abroad.

The questionnaire is structured into different blocks: after the first one (personal information), next sections belong to the so called category of "semi-standardized" interviews. This kind of qualitative method provides the best solution for investigating the present topic (Kenneth D. Bailey, 1992). Analyzing a small sample of experiences, instead of taking a wide statistical approach, seems to be the best way to define the features of the nowadays "new migrations". All interviews were conducted during the summer of 2007 (July-September). During the sampling process, a certain priority was given to the "quality" of experiences, starting from a minimum of 8 months of stay. The subjects were selected after a preliminary analysis. Useful information about the presence of Italians in Finland or about Finns in Italy has been provided by Universities, associations, private and public institutions. Even personal initiative represented a good way to get some significant figures. All respondents received the questionnaire via email. Each was given a specific code between 1 and 15, preceded by "ITA" for Italians, and by "FIN" for Finns.

The first block of questions (Personal information) collected objective information such as age, gender, current residence, previous working experiences, current occupation and studies.

The results can be summarized in the following tables.

The evident unbalanced gender distribution is not accidental. On the contrary, it reflects the real situation very well: when sampling new immigrants among young Italians in Finland, it was much easier to find men than women. This is mainly due both to professional/educational reasons (Finland seems much more attractive to technological and scientific operators, and these fields in Italy are attended mostly by men) and to personal ones (the interest of young Italians for Scandinavian girls is quite an old story!). As for the Finnish sample, it is not surprising that 14 respondents out of 15 are women. The disproportion is correspondingly due both to personal and professional reasons (Italy tends to attract persons in artistic or humanistic fields, and generally such subjects in Finland are attended by women). In this sense, the unbalanced distribution of gender can be expected: the composition of the samples gives a realistic picture of the phenomenon.

The educational and professional background of the respondents is interesting. According to theoretical assumptions, "new migrations" generally concern persons with high educational profile. The selected sample confirms it well: 14 Italians out of 15 have got at least a bachelor degree, 2 have completed their Ph.D. programs and 3 of them are doctoral students. As for the fields of education, there is an evident prevalence of scientific studies (10) over the socio-economical ones (5). The fact that 10 respondents out of 15 are involved into scientific studies

leads to suppose that in their perspective Finland looks much more attractive for this kind of backgrounds. The well-known reputation of Finland in such sectors as technology and sciences probably represents a strong pull factor for Italian students, workers and researchers. The same situation is confirmed when considering the current working positions.

For Finns, the analysis of educational background depicts a different situation. Even if the level of education is similarly high, with 10 graduates and one Ph.D. student, the most relevant difference to the Italian group appears in the study fields. The Finnish group shows a clear prevalence of the humanistic field (4 graduates in literature, one in arts and one "double" degree in language and musical pedagogy); if the degrees concerning economic and social studies are very close in number with the Italians' (4), it is quite surprising to note the complete lack of scientific graduates or students, that on the contrary represented the biggest group among Italians.

Some important conclusions can be drawn: the general absence of Finns studying science shouldn't imply that this field is not such important in the country; on the contrary, technological and science areas generally are the most popular among students, even considering that they guarantee a faster access to the labor market. The lack of these fields in the sample can rather lead to suppose that it is much more natural that young Finns with humanistic backgrounds develop serious interests towards Italy. That is to say, towards a country that has always been linked to as-

Code	Age	Gender	Residence	Education	Work exp.	Current pos.
ITA-1	29	M	Turku	Graduate	Generic	Ph.D. student
ITA-2	29	F	Milano	Graduate	N/N	Ph.D. student
ITA-3	28	M	Helsinki	Graduate	Ind. Designer	Ind. Designer
ITA-4	32	M	Pescara	Graduate	Publishing/journalism	Researcher
ITA-5	24	F	Treviso (prov.)	Graduate	N/N	Student
ITA-6	32	M	Milano	Ph.D.	Generic	Researcher
ITA-7	27	M	Turku	Graduate	N/N	Engineer
ITA-8	24	M	Brescia (Prov.)	Graduate	Generic	Student
ITA-9	24	M	Turku	High school	Generic	Student
ITA-10	32	F	Belluno (prov.)	Graduate	Teacher	Ph.D. student
ITA-11	30	M	Turku	Graduate	Chemist	Researcher/chemist
ITA-12	29	M	Turku	Graduate	Generic	Marketing/software
ITA-13	33	F	Kaarina	Ph.D.	Researcher	Researcher
ITA-14	31	F	Tampere	Graduate	Legal assistant	Law consultant
ITA-15	28	M	Helsinki	Graduate	Generic	Marketing
FIN-1	28	F	Roma	High school	Generic	Generic
FIN-2	34	F	Perugia	Graduate	Assistant professor	Generic
FIN-3	23	F	Turku	High school	Generic	Student
FIN-4	27	F	Helsinki	Graduate	Clerk	Clerk
FIN-5	30	F	Turku	High school	Generic	Unemployed
FIN-6	25	M	Turku	Graduate	N/N	Ph.D. student
FIN-7	34	F	Kaarina	High school	Generic	Tourism/ business
FIN-8	26	F	Milano	Graduate	Generic	Generic
FIN-9	28	F	Turku	Graduate	Generic	Unemployed
FIN-10	35	F	Ascoli (prov.)	Graduate	Translations/Marketing	International officer
FIN-11	35	F	Chieti (prov.)	Graduate	Secretary/interpreter	Teacher
FIN-12	30	F	Chieti (prov.)	Graduate (2)	Teacher	International officer
FIN-13	31	F	Torino	Graduate	Translations/Marketing	International officer
FIN-14	28	F	Milano	Graduate	N/N	Student
FIN-15	30	F	Turku	High school	N/N	Student

pects concerning history, culture, language and arts.

The second block of questions wants to clarify some general issues, such as the length of the experience abroad, the reasons for this choice and the willingness to live permanently in a foreign country. In some cases, this migratory experience is already over; in some others, respondents still live in the host country. The sample in-

cludes both situations on purpose, because it seems useful to compare the experiences of persons whose migration was just temporary with the ones of respondents that, on the contrary, decided to have a long-term change in their life. So, if the minimum length is 8 months, it looked much better not to set a maximum limit.

The third block (dreams, hopes, life expectations) helps to under-

stand the respondents' vision of their future, trying to verify if they give more importance to "material affairs" (such as job, education, economy etc...) or to personal and sentimental ones. The fourth block (deep motivations), is aimed to verify in a more explicit way those motivations that have brought respondents to live this kind of experience. In this sense, they have been asked to explain what pushed

them to spend a relevant part of their life in a country looking so different from their native place. Block number five (national identity) wants to measure the level of national identification of the respondents with their native country: how deeply do they feel to be Italians or Finns? In the same block they were asked to express their opinion about the native country, indicating both its best and worst aspects. In the following section (changes) respondents described the most important changes that have occurred after the move. The section number 7 (vision of the host country) required to indicate what kind of idea did they have about the host country before moving and in which way this original perception has changed nowadays. This point is very useful to verify the presence of some possible stereotyped initial perceptions, evaluating their eventual evolution after the real life experience. The only question presented by the block number 8 (everyday experience in the host country) required to describe a specific episode that has particularly affected the respondents during their experience abroad. This question, apart from being an important instrument to collect anecdotes, is very useful to verify the nature of situations to which respondents tended to attach more importance during their life abroad. Through this question, it is possible to verify if these episodes were more connected to working experiences, to social relations or to the everyday life.

The last block (European identity) represents a critical moment of the entire research. First, it is important to check which kind of

perception new emigrants have about Europe and how deeply do they feel to belong to it; the last question tries to measure how much this experience abroad influenced the process of coming "into" European visions.

A lot of significant aspects concerning new migrations and perception of Europe emerged after the interviews. After the semantic analysis of the respondents' words, an original portrait of the topics under investigation emerged. The complete English version of the research can be freely downloaded from the Institute of Migration in Turku (www.migrationinstitute.fi/pdf/webreports.htm). It is an exhaustive report of all results and comments, offering a detailed analysis of materials collected through the questionnaire.

The research includes an interesting appendix, where Leena Lander, a famous Finnish writer, recently raised to a "European dimension" discusses about topics as new generations, integration and image of `<?xml:namespace prefix = st1 ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarts" />`Finland abroad.

In conclusion, the study of new migrations in Europe is like taking a long voyage inside emblematic aspects of modernity, simultaneously revealing many neglected features of the Finnish and Italian backgrounds. Even if the "Finnish-Italian case" hasn't reached any great interest yet, the special point of observation implied by "two opposite sides of EU", has offered an interesting anticipation of the next future tendencies for the whole European stage.

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